



RIVERWISE

trust the current, hold fast to one another

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RIVERWISE

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Mission Statement

WHO

Riverwise is a community-based magazine created by a team of authors, writers, photojournalists, parents, grandparents, students, organizers, activists, artists, educators and visionaries. We are working to create media that reflect local activism and the profound new work being done in and around Detroit neighborhoods. We envision deepening relationships through media that serve as an essential part of weaving beloved communities. We will celebrate personal Detroit stories and the process of evolving ideas.

WHY

It is often said that we live in two Detroits—one affluent, the other neglected. We know there are many versions of Detroit. In some communities there is a striving toward self-determination and new, visionary ways of life. It is our goal to show these efforts that are rooted in community, sustainable, transformative, and based upon new forms of citizenship. Detroit is a movement city. And our movements need creative media. By sharing resources and encouraging open participation of engaged citizens, especially people of color, *Riverwise* shall help us examine our own personal and political contradictions and generate lasting solutions.

WHAT WE NEED

Riverwise needs your stories of resilience, visionary resistance, place-based education, self-determination and sustainable, creative ways of transforming yourselves and your communities. Please contact us with article ideas and notice of programs taking place in your neighborhood. We'll do our best to follow up.

Or submit an article, personal anecdote, poem, interview, photo, or illustration of your own for our next edition of *Riverwise*. Submissions should not be more than 1,500 words long and may be edited for content and/or space. They should also include contact information and proper credits and affiliations.

The *Riverwise* collective invites you to visit our website, and check out our blogs and podcasts. Visit www.riverwisedetroit.org, for more details.



COVER ART

Part of her longtime "Godezz Project," this edition's cover art showcases the work of **Konstance Patton**, an Indigenous American artist, who is a member of The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in Northern Michigan, and grew up in Detroit. This project was born in part out of her passion to envision new worlds where the mystery, magic, and multitudinous identities of Black and Indigenous women are celebrated and embraced in the everyday.

Hear more about this project and about Konstance's journey from hustling in Detroit to transforming notions of art, space and place in New York and beyond in *Riverwise* Podcast #22 - The Revolutionary Potential of Paint, A Conversation with Street Artist Konstance Patton. Scan QR code on a smart phone or visit www.riverwisedetroit.org/podcast.



Photo of Indigenous Corn by Rosebud Schneider

Keeping Each Other Warm Through the Storm

BY RIVERWISE EDITORIAL BOARD

In the TV series “Game of Thrones,” the saying “winter is coming” has become infamous as a potent reminder that change is on the horizon, and you must get prepared to protect yourself against what may be some long, cold, dangerous days ahead. Here in Michigan, this idea is nothing new, as many of us are familiar with the steps that we must take to mentally and physically get ready for a time of the year that can often pose serious challenges to our everyday lives and force us to think innovatively about how to surmount them. Right now, as trees shed their leaves, sunny days give way to rain and shadow, and temperatures cool, is an excellent time to pause and think about the changes to come and those that are taking place. We might recognize that though we may be facing some rough days ahead, our past experiences give us wisdom, and that our greatest strengths often lie within those things we approach with the most trepidation.

It is in this mood that we here at *Riverwise* have spent a lot of time lately as we ponder the ways in which the many upheavals, uprisings, and upendings of systemic injustice we’ve witnessed over the past year and a half are exposing a moment in history of transition and transformation. A moment that if we pay attention enough to the lessons of the past and to the work being done right now across the city and beyond, we can see as getting us ready to enter into and engage with new dimensions of humanity, social justice, and solidarity.

Our collective knowledge and strength can serve to move us towards more visionary ideals of society. By examining the responses we’ve had to old and emerging threats we believe we are witnessing an identity crisis on



Water protectors stand against Enbridge Line 5 in Mackinaw City. May 13, 2021.

a societal and social scale. Over the past year, we’ve seen elected officials, greedy corporate actors, and those who wish to profit off of the pain of others, use a devastating pandemic in order to vie for more power. They have weaponized knowledge through disturbing and deadly mis- and disinformation campaigns. However, in a rejection of those systemic abuses, we’ve also watched as revolutionary, community-focused, place-based organizing has stepped up to push back against such forces. People feed their neighbors, bring water to those without, open their homes to those with nowhere to go, provide rides to the polls, care for sick friends and family, and help one another ease the burdens we are all facing in this time of collective grief. The idea of mutual aid has become once again a hot topic as many deepen their understanding of the ways in which the resources we need to survive and thrive are often available right within our own networks. As we grapple with what kind of society we want to be, what kind of people we want to be, who we want to follow as leaders, it is clear that our ideas of identity and representation are shifting.

(R)evolutionary movements are often born or reinvigorated during times of crisis...when the veil is lifted off of our eyes and we’re given a peek behind the wizard’s curtain. Across the globe, as the top 1% increased their wealth by nearly a trillion dollars, millions of people were left to sink further into poverty and to succumb to a deadly virus or the side-effects of depression, trauma and joblessness it has imposed. In addition, as our forests and communities burn, flooding becomes more and more commonplace, our water is poisoned by corporate dumping and oil spills, our atmosphere becomes more and more polluted, the majority of the world’s climate

scientists have warned that if we don't take action now we will be too late to turn back the tide on the kinds of catastrophic disasters we are already facing here in Michigan at an increasing pace. And, as shown by the willingness of the Canadian government to back Enbridge as it continues to illegally pump oil through the Straits of Mackinac, rather than the people in both the US and Canada rallying against further environmental destruction, we cannot afford to fall prey to any false sense of security emanating from systems designed around extraction and exploitation.

Around the world people are starting to recognize the truth about neo-liberal capitalist systems; they are unnecessarily harsh, abusive, environmentally disastrous, fundamentally inequitable, and will never deliver us from a reality based upon the continuation of poverty and dehumanization. Workers of all sectors are standing up against intolerable working conditions for inhumane pay; artists, musicians, poets, activists are taking to the streets to reclaim spaces that we have been told don't belong to us or aren't for us anyway; water protectors are putting their bodies on the line to defend our right to water and the right of the water to be free from industrial pollution; people everywhere are speaking out against the kind of misogynistic, transphobic, racist and classist rhetoric which seeks to place blame on and shame people for being "abnormal," actively oppressed, and not willing to take it anymore; many of us are putting serious energy into rethinking our values and priorities and what kinds of legacies we want to leave behind for future generations.

None of this is easy, and we must be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking that everyone feels as we do. Right here in Detroit, for example, with the defeat of Proposal P, a serious and painful blow to many of the organizers and community members who worked so hard to create such a beautiful piece of liberatory policy, we must acknowledge that we've got our work cut out for us as we fight against a system that



Riverwise Collective welcomes Eric Campbell (on left) back.

in its own attempts at survival is willing to do anything to survive. But, as the visionary and active forms of resistance we highlight in this edition of *Riverwise* show, change is possible, and community engagement and activism work. It will continue to take difficult conversations that we'd often wish to avoid, curious experimentation, changing our narrative frameworks from those of dependence upon the system to freedom from it, grappling with lessons from the past both in ways which recognize where things went right, and where things went wrong, and a reclamation of our true histories, not just those put upon us by those who are afraid of our collective voice and power.

So, as we think about new visions, new ideologies, new pathways forward, this edition seeks to highlight the work of those who actively seek to challenge the status quo and dogmatic norms, those who see moments of crisis as opportunities to create culture shift, and those who push us to embrace the ever-present revolutionary potential of the here and now.

The work of cover artist Konstance Patton, who is also featured in a discussion for *Riverwise* Podcast 22, exposes how a simple act of reclamation of space during

the pandemic has generated new pathways for collaboration; Katey Carey's discussion of her participation in the protests against Line 3 provides a glimpse into how allyship and self-reflection is a crucial component of our continued survival; the work of Dr. Walter Rodney reminds us that movements are measured in generations and there is still much to be done to ensure a place in the world for all that is free from the toxicity of white supremacy.

As we work here at *Riverwise* to uplift visionary work, we agree that now is the time for all of us to dream big and dream out loud. We don't have to have a crystallized picture of the future, we just need to know that along our way toward it we are committed to a set of principles that puts more stock in the infrastructure of people than that of profit, that sees all people as deserving of dignity and recognition, that sees community building and knowledge transfer as the real form of generational wealth, and which respects and protects the natural resources and other creatures on this planet on which we depend and with whom we share this earth.

Winter may be coming, but we will get through it just fine, if we work together to keep one another warm.

Learning As We Grow: Turning Disappointments into Moments for Healing

BY JUSTIN ONWENU

This past August, when many Detroiters who had worked long and hard to help revise the City Charter learned that the passage of Proposal P had failed, they took to social media to voice their feelings, and offer ideas for the future. This article comes from a Facebook post uploaded by environmental justice activist Justin Onwenu on the day after the vote.

—Riverwise Ed.

Being a progressive in Michigan can be uhhhhhhh tiring so here are some very long and very random thoughts. To be clear, these are reflections that I've had with myself and friends in progressive spaces for years so don't read this as despair or an election post mortem.

1. Being good on policy shouldn't absolve progressives from the nuts and bolts of good politics (voter contact, fundraising, coalition building, constituent services, giveaway events, endorsements, ads)! Just because you're progressive (that goes for organizers, politicians, grassroots leaders, anyone) doesn't mean we deserve to win by default. YES, dark money in elections and in the legislative process is a problem but we have to stop pretending that those are our only roadblocks. A lot of movement folks have



Justin Onwenu speaking at Green Ooze Rally in Macomb County, 2019.

forgotten that unions matter, seniors vote, every election has a win number, faith is an important cornerstone of many communities, a lot of people watch TV, good tone/accessible language shouldn't be dismissed, most people dislike inequality and are also fine with capitalism. You can be annoyed by the world as it is, you can wish that people held different beliefs, but right now progressives need to operate within reality. Abdullah Hammoud, one of Michigan's most progressive leaders ran for mayor (and won) on lowering property taxes, stopping drag racing, and supporting small businesses and seniors. He also raised \$,

got union support and knocked doors. Not to oversimplify things but there's this assumption that when progressives win or lose it's about ideology. All politics is still local and to win you still have to do normal politics... i.e. get endorsements, contact voters, raise money and focus on issues people care about!

2. Who really speaks for "the people?" For decades in movement circles there's been this underlying assumption that nonprofits and organizers are the ones really speaking for neighborhoods and for everyday working class people. We should

think about this a lot more. I'd say a pastor getting hundreds of people in their sanctuary every week is a pretty effective "organizer"; I'd say a media personality that has thousands listening to their radio/tv show everyday is pretty connected to "the people"; and I'd say the elected officials (whether they're "moderate" or "progressive") who handily win elections probably have some sort of mandate from normal, informed voters. In a democracy elections are the ultimate measuring stick and voters aren't stupid. We have to stop assuming that because people don't vote the way we want that they just need more education. I do think shifting people's ideology is important but that only happens if we're laser-focused on persuasion and enter with clear eyes about where people actually are (that includes stopping the assumption that all working-class voters are progressives who just haven't "woken up" yet).

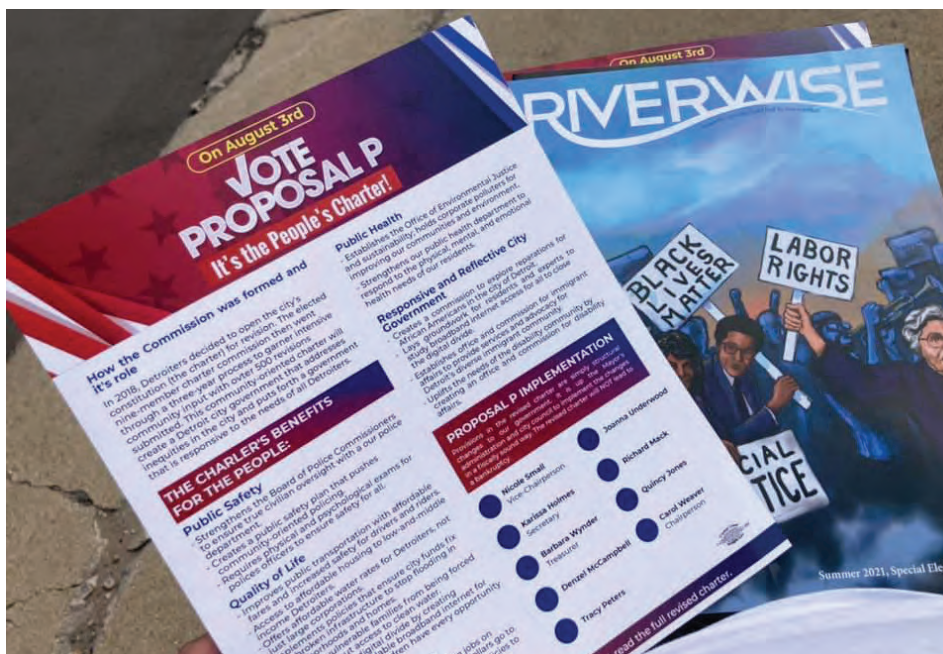
3. We need more grassroots leaders in political spaces. I've spent a decent amount of time in both progressive movement spaces and also DNC/Michigan

Democratic Party spaces and there are huge gaps. I do think that some party loyalists treat politics as a hobby/sport and need to be more focused on how Democrats should actually use power to improve lives (not just win elections years away). With that said, the vast majority of people who participate in normal Dem party stuff (becoming a precinct delegate, attending DNC conventions, registering voters, etc.) do so because they really do care and are invested in making our country better. There's nothing to be afraid of, we just need well organized progressives to show up more. Dana Nessel, the most progressive Attorney General Michigan has seen, beat the odds on the favorite in the 2018 AG primary and she had to go to a lot of normal "democrat establishment" meetings to do so. Pressuring lawmakers from the outside without at least trying to build relationships has undermined our movement a lot.

4. We need to focus on relevant issues. There's a lot to fight for. Detroiters were overtaxed hundreds of millions of dollars, thousands of Michiganders have

dealt with water shutoffs, families throughout the US are still dealing with natural disasters. These are issues that I think movement leaders and residents are pretty aligned on. But we can do better and we need to think more deeply about what issues we're focusing on, WHO we're speaking to and HOW we should communicate on those issues. If people say crime and street racing keep them up at night then we need to have an actual strategy for responding to addressing this frustration. These aren't things to paper over with talking points or broad social theories.

Again, this is not a despair or giving-up post. There are progressive lawmakers who are doing amazing work, there are grassroots organizations who continue to build deeply rooted relationships across the state, there are grassroots leaders who continue to make miracles happen year after year, and there are amazing candidates in Detroit and throughout MI who just advanced to the general election. I feel hopeful overall but these things have been on my mind for some time. Thoughts?



Detroit August 2021 Primary Election Materials distributed by Riverwise Collective.

Justin Onwenu holds a BA in International Health and Policy from Rice University and is a Columbia Law Class of 2024 student from Detroit, Michigan. In 2020 he served as a White House Intern for the Council on Environmental Quality. Appointed by Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, he currently serves as the youngest member of the Michigan Advisory Council on Environmental Justice and Black Leadership Advisory Council. In 2020, he served as a Democratic National Committee Convention Delegate and was appointed to the DNC's Environment and Climate Crisis Council.



Benton Harbor Water Struggle

BY VALERIE JEAN

Benton Harbor emergency community meeting on July 9, 2021, about the high levels of lead in the water. Photo by Valerie Jean.

Folks from Flint, Highland Park, and Detroit arrived in Benton Harbor on July 10, 2021, to show support because we know what the Benton Harbor community is going through all too well. We have been fighting for clean affordable water for years. We all gathered with the community to talk about lead in the water and what must be done about it.

Fifteen parts per billion is the level of lead in water that's considered the "action level" by the Environmental Protection Agency. It's the point at which steps need to be taken, even though they recognize no amount of lead in the water is safe for humans and animals. Shockingly, ninety percent of lead tests in Benton Harbor since October 2018 have fallen at or slightly below 21 parts per billion. An emergency appeal filed on September 9th to the EPA states that lead levels have consistently tested well above the federal action limit, with recordings as high in some samples as 889 parts per billion. That is almost 60 times the action limit.

It has been three years since Benton Harbor found out they had elevated lead in their water. It is likely that they have been using and paying for poisoned water for years. The city has said that it will take 20 years to replace the pipes. 20 years is Absolutely Unacceptable! As a band-aid, the city has provided filters for the community's kitchen faucets. The residents struggle because they don't know how to properly install them or use them.

Many of the filters are not even certified to filter out lead and other heavy particulates. Elin Betanzo from Safe Water Engineering and The People's Water Board talked with residents at the community gathering and showed them which water filters work and how to install them on their sinks.

Residents say they have been notified by the city that their water bills would be going up 11% in the coming months. One gentleman stood up at the community gathering and asked angrily "Why do we have to pay for water that is killing us?!"

One resident said at the meeting that Benton Harbor had sent out a boil water alert. We learned from Flint that boiling the water only concentrates the lead and that people end up breathing it in. Benton Harbor telling their residents to boil their water is a complete lack of understanding of the life-and-death situation the residents face every day.

At the meeting Reverend Ed Pinkney declared, "Let the truth be told! The city of Benton Harbor is in a real crisis. It has been in a crisis for the last 3 years. We have exceedingly high lead levels and it seems like nobody really cares. The mayor of Benton Harbor, Marcus Muhammad does not have a clue. Governor Whitmer has refused to provide bottled water stations in communities. The city has provided water filters without education on how to use them. The community

is being poisoned by this water. We must hold Governor Whitmer accountable for her words, her actions, and her inaction. We must draw the line in the sand and say no more. Our children's future depends on it."

The State of Michigan must set up water stations in communities so they have access to drinking water. Nobody should be bathing, drinking, or cooking with water that has lead in it.

On September 9, 2021, The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), The People's Water Board Coalition, and others filed an emergency appeal to the United States Environmental Protection Agency stating that "For at least the past three years, Benton Harbor residents have been subjected to levels of lead contamination from their public water system that presents an imminent and substantial endangerment to their health. Levels of lead contamination have significantly exceeded the lead action level set by the EPA's lead and copper rule continually since at least the fall of 2018."

Scan this QR code to read the recent Guardian article: **A Black town's water is more poisoned than Flint's. In a white town nearby, it's clean | Water | The Guardian**



Building Pipelines for Peace: Water Protectors Come Together to Demand the Shutdown of Line 3

BY KATEY CAREY

In late summer, I had the honor of traveling to Anishinaabe land (so-called “Northern Minnesota”) to support the indigenous-led resistance against the Line 3 pipeline being non-consensually built on native land. Line 3 is a tar sands oil pipeline owned by Enbridge, a Canadian pipeline company, that is being built through vulnerable watersheds, home to manoomin (wild rice), a centerpiece of Anishinaabe culture.* This pipeline is also routed to cross through the headwaters of the Mississippi River and end near the shores of Anishinaabewi-gichigami (Lake Superior).**

In addition to the devastating impacts on our climate and the violations of indigenous sovereignty and treaty rights, the introduction of housing encampments for pipeline workers — known as man camps — has led to a localized spike in violence against native women and two-spirit relatives, exacerbating the epidemic known as MMIWR (missing and murdered indigenous women and relatives). The list of why this pipeline project is so detrimental goes on and on; during my time at the frontlines, I learned there

are few areas of our lives that this project doesn’t touch and I suggest visiting stopline3.org to get a better understanding of the context and impacts of Line 3.

The things I witnessed during my time there ranged from horrific to life-giving to transformative. I saw police officers with clubs staring robotically at an indigenous matriarch as she described how their support for this pipeline is stealing their children’s futures, unmoved as they brutally arrested those defending the water for all. I experienced being in community with beautiful queer, trans, and two-spirit people dreaming up new ways and honoring traditional ways to care for one another and the more-than-human relatives around us. I felt a groundedness in my being that I had never experienced before as I protected the water that gave me my life, sensing my collective and ancestral self.

The most personal reason I had for joining the frontlines was the threat Line 3 poses to Anishinaabewi-gichigami. I was born and raised in close relationship with this sacred water on Anishinaabe land (Michigan’s Upper Peninsula) and knew that if I wasn’t willing to take risks in order to protect the water that gave me my life, then I did not deserve to be in relationship with gichigami.

I’m a white settler-descended person who has been living on stolen Anishinaabe land for 26 years. Because of the incredible teachers and elders I’ve met on my path, I’m learning what my obligations are to this time, place and all of the beings who reside here. All of us living in so-called Michigan, and particularly those of us who are not native to



Water protectors stand near a comrade suspended in a tripod blockade at an enbridge construction site. Photo by @campmigizi on Instagram.

this place, have the opportunity to grow our souls in our own struggle against Enbridge's Line 5, which threatens the land and water we live with as it runs much closer to home, cutting through the upper and lower peninsulas and through our beloved Great Lakes under the water of the Straits of Mackinac.

All waters are interconnected and the borders between states and countries are false colonial constructions. Those of us living on Turtle Island—and particularly on Anishinaabe land—must take part in the struggle against modern-day continuations of colonial powers, exemplified by Enbridge's violence against native peoples and lands, and be in support of indigenous sovereignty. The resistance to Line 3 and Line 5 are one in the same as they both threaten the waters across Anishinaabe territory and therefore all life; we are all interconnected and we all live “downstream.” This shared struggle gives us an incredible opportunity to create decolonized ways of existing together that include new and old ways, center healthy relationship building as the foundation of a just culture, and heal ancestral pains and woundings while creating a beautiful way of life for future generations. After my time at the Line 3 resistance, I spent time with the lake. When I was first enveloped by the water, I felt an entirely new sense of relationship between us. I was no longer just a child of the water—I was recognized as a protector. This was the first time in my life I experienced what I can best describe as a sensation of right-relationship. In the shared struggles against lines 3 and 5, we have an opportunity to build right-relationship with the land, water, and beings where we live in whatever ways we are able. We have the chance to learn what our obligations are to this “time on the clock of the world.”

*this information comes from stopline3.org, a hub of information about the resistance to Line 3.

**decolonialatlas.wordpress.com provides context and information about the indigenous place names of the lands we live on.

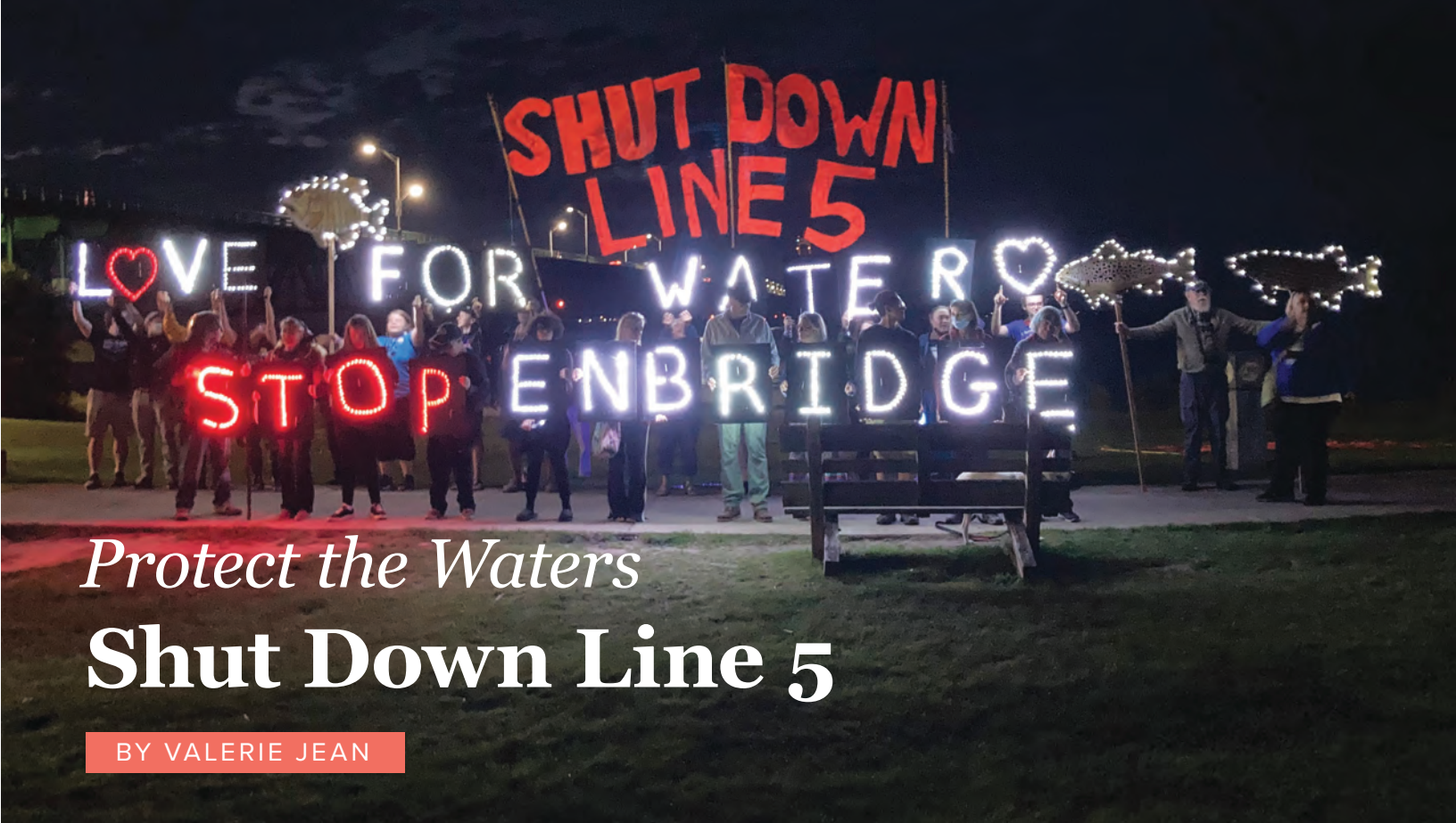


St. Louis County police brutally arrest water protectors near a barrel blockade at the Gowan Pump Station. Photo by @campmizigi on Instagram.



Artwork depicting Line 5 as the black snake and its devastating path through the Great Lakes region. “Prophecy,” 2017 screenprint, Katey Carey.

Katey Carey (she/her) lives in waawiyatanong with beloved queer and trans kin, learning what it means to belong to place. She is a teacher and walks alongside fellow unravelers of the messy web that is whiteness.



Protect the Waters Shut Down Line 5

BY VALERIE JEAN

Michigan Coalition Against Tar Sands (MICATS) Light Brigade Shut Down Line 5 action at the Mackinaw Bridge September 3, 2021. Photo by Valerie Jean.

Dear water,

Thank you for all the things that you do.

I just wanted to say thank you! Your freshwater and saltwater components both play crucial roles to filter, feed and hydrate the soil, animals, humans, and weather that controls the climate on earth. Water gives me hope, joy, and energy. Mni wiconi (Water is life)!! Protect the water!

—Daily Water Affirmation from Amanda Robinson

One of the largest inland oil spills in our nation's history happened in July 2010 when Enbridge's oil line 6B ruptured and dumped over a million gallons of tar sands crude oil into Talmadge Creek, a small tributary to the Kalamazoo River near Marshall, Michigan. Thousands of animals and fish died. People got very sick, many never recovered, some died. To this day, Enbridge still has never been able to clean up the line 6B oil spill.

People from all over Michigan have been demanding Enbridge's Line 5 be shut down for years. And for most of that time, those calls fell on deaf ears. However, in November of 2020, responding to the overwhelming demands of organizers and citizens across the state, Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel announced that the State of Michigan would revoke and terminate Enbridge's line 5 easement through the Great Lakes. This move was aimed at protecting the Public Trust Law and the water in our precious state from a catastrophic tar sands oil spill like the one in Kalamazoo.

Line 5 pumps the world's dirtiest oil through 70 different Michigan tributaries as it makes its way to the Detroit Marathon refinery. So in addition to the threats that the pipeline poses to our fresh water in Michigan, it also leads directly to the poisoning of many of our people in the city. Marathon's massive refinery is located in SW Detroit, 48217. This area has been scientifically determined to be the most polluted zip code in Michigan. Largely a black and brown community the people in 48217 get sick at higher rates, often can't sell their homes because of the pollution, and live in what former resident Emma Lockridge, who organized against the refinery calls a "sacrifice zone." A place where people are left to die in the shadows of the industrial pollution that allows everyone else to continue living their lives without bearing the brunt of its repercussions.

A spill at any point on Line 5's route into any of the tributaries would be devastating to all of Michigan. Enbridge was supposed to shut down on May 12, 2021, based on the governor's order, but they have refused to stop transporting tar sands oil. So, just as they have always done, indigenous leaders and other water protectors have continued to organize actions and protests throughout 2021. The most recent of these was held on September 4, 2021, when hundreds of people gathered in Mackinaw City to show that love is stronger than greed and to demand Line 5 be shut down permanently.

It is over, Enbridge. You have been served eviction papers. **We** don't need your dirty oil. **We** have a vision for the future and you are not in it.

Creating Connections: A Totem Pole Journey for the Protection of Sacred Spaces

BY DEB HANSEN

The House of Tears Carvers of the Lummi Nation and their totem pole stopped in Mackinaw City in late July. It was their last stop en route to their final destination, the U.S. capitol. Their journey, called the Red Road to D.C., included stops at sacred sites across the country, to build collective will to protect these treasures, now endangered from dangerous industrial dams, mining, and pipelines. For 20 years, the carvers have worked to raise awareness and bring communities together. This was their most ambitious project to date.

Whitney Gravelle, Chairperson of Bay Mills Indian Community, was the host of the Michigan event. The Bay Mills community has led some of the legal action to shut down Line 5. After returning to Michigan from Washington, D.C. for the presentation ceremony, she stated:

“Today, I had the honor to meet Madame Secretary Deb Haaland at the Department of Interior. Being in her presence, the presence of her team, and the presence of all my relatives as we shared our visions with one another for the future of Indian Country was a blessing beyond measure.

A future where our people can celebrate, honor, and continue being who we are as indigenous Tribal Nations without fear, trauma, or prejudice. A future where our children, the next seven generations, have a relationship with the land and water. A future where our sovereignty is respected and honored. A future where language, culture, and tradition flourish and thrive.”

The carvers honored us with a visit to Enbridge’s Line 5 because of the twin crude oil pipelines that transit the Straits of Mackinac, threatening

the largest freshwater system on the planet, treaty rights, climate stability, and putting a thriving local economy based on water, beauty, and recreation at risk.

At the event, Uncle Doug, brother of Jewell James, the master carver, told the story of their travels to a place in Miami where orcas were held in captivity and trained to perform. The orca had spoken to him asking for help, maybe in a dream, so they went to Florida. He said that during the show the orca stopped performing and refused to continue.

The orca and the Lummi have known one another for a long time, and they consider them “our relations who live under the sea.” The Lummi people work to protect these relatives and also the chinook, not only as a source of food, but as family.

The two stops prior to Mackinaw City also involved crude oil pipelines. One of the most infamous is Standing Rock. As the site of historic resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline it has become not only a place of empowerment, leadership, and unity for indigenous peoples, but a pilgrimage site, as well, for allies who recognize the moral significance of the struggle and the youth who first spoke out. In northern Minnesota where Enbridge’s Line 3 is under construction, the fierce commitment to protect water, climate, and community has been led by indigenous women. Banners reading: “Defend the sacred” and “Water. Climate. Community” go to the heart of what’s at stake.

As I go to events such as these focused upon protecting our water, more and more, I see signs that include messages about stopping both Line 3 and Line 5. The

connections being built across communities are growing stronger. Water and climate protectors, including Winona LaDuke, came to northern Michigan from Minnesota to stand in solidarity with those who called for Enbridge’s eviction, as the corporation continued to operate Line 5 illegally after the revocation of the easement that gave them permission to occupy the bottom lands of the Great Lakes. A delegation from Michigan traveled to the Treaty People Gathering in Minnesota to return the favor, participating in two nonviolent actions. If completed, the Line 3 tar sands expansion project would be the equivalent of bringing 50 coal plants online as the planet burns. We can’t afford to allow such devastating pollution to threaten our environment.

Reflecting on the significance of the journey to D.C., Uncle Doug said that the totem pole itself wasn’t the point. Bringing people together, protecting everything that we depend on for life and health is the point. Relationships of trust across boundaries and differences are being built. We are reclaiming our power to collaborate and create for the common good as institutions crumble before our eyes. Restoring a culture of health, centered on reverence and respect for the living world, and seeing ourselves as a part of it packs transformative potential beyond law and regulation. It is our responsibility and privilege to create a world where life can thrive again, for all our children.

Watch this video of the Totem Pole’s journey:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVjYHq6tqQc>



Rev. Deb Hansen is a board member with Michigan Interfaith Power & Light. She worked for many years in corporate America before becoming a refugee of modern culture. She served as a chaplain at Sinai-Grace Hospital and is currently a spiritual director, water and climate protector, and advocate for healing and repairing our relationships with the larger kin-dom and with one another. She's endlessly fascinated by the process of cultural transformation that allows human life to renew itself.

(Top) A crowd gathers around the totem pole at the Straits of Mackinac endangered by Enbridge Line 5. Photo from The Red Road to D.C.

(Middle) Native drummers. Photo by Lorie Axtell Archambeau.

(Bottom) Whitney Gravelle, Chairperson of Bay Mills Indian Community and event host. Photo by Deb Hansen.



Increasing Access: **Sustainably & Locally Grown in Detroit**

BY DANIELLE DAGUIO

Curbside pickup for the Online Farm Store at Keep Growing Detroit farm.

It begins with the growers

When her herbs and vegetables are at their best, you can find Grown in Detroit (GID) grower Detra Iverson of Love N Labor Botanicals Farm, dropping them off to the Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) farm. Her produce, along with that of several other GID growers, can be found in orders through three different markets.

Each week it's always more than just a quick visit to the farm for Iverson. There is inherent community building that happens when the growers gather. She notes, "the more you partner with other growers the more you can grow that knowledge of how to better farm, and you get more ideas on how to add that produce to your diet."

Originating in 2006, the GID program is an extension of Keep Growing Detroit's Garden Resource Program (GRP). The GRP provides access to high quality seeds and locally grown transplants to

gardens in Detroit, Hamtramck, and Highland Park throughout the entire growing season. GID is the next step for growers who want to take an entrepreneurial approach to their farming and gardening. GID growers adhere to growing all of their produce through sustainable practices, and participate in workdays and volunteer shifts at market. Through GID, at no cost to the grower, they have access to sell their produce through the Online Farm Store, CSA (community supported agriculture), and at the GID farmstand at Eastern Market. The grower also receives 100% of the profit from any fruits, vegetables, herbs, transplants, or honey that they sell.

GID is a place where hundreds of growers have honed their farming, gardening, and entrepreneurial craft. More importantly, it fosters long-term relationships that are foundational to growers' business models. For example, in 2012, former GID growers applied the lessons

they learned within the program to cultivate City Commons CSA, a formalized multi-farm Cooperative in Detroit.

Another inherent value of GID is to promote racial equity within the food system. This year, 17 of the 26 active GID growers are Black and Brown farmers. In total, these growers account for 65% of the markets' sales. A majority of customers are Detroiters, just like the farmers, so the dollars spent and dollars earned through GID produce, then circulate within the city itself.

Access to good food one box at a time

For Tracee Brooks, being a customer of the Online Farm Store is more than just a box of veggies every other week, it became a way to learn more about where her food comes from, the quality of food, and eating with the seasons, "I was a novice. I would go to the grocery store to buy vegetables,

and it would just go bad,” explains Brooks. “Being a part of this made me appreciate locally grown items, understand sustainability in food, and how we need to cherish it! I’m feeding my family good and healthy food, and it also feels good to support local farmers.”

For those who like to shop ahead of time virtually, every Friday at 9a, the Online Farm Store is stocked with the latest and greatest from GID farms and gardens. Customers are able to build their own customized box of produce until Tuesdays at 12p. On Thursdays from 4p–6p, customers enjoy a contactless pickup of their order right at KGD Farm, located in the historic Eastern Market district. For those who want to shop in person, customers can find the produce at the Grown in Detroit farm stand on Saturdays at Eastern Market’s Shed 2.

Through GID, expanding access to good, quality food includes expanding alternative financial options. Customers are able to pay through traditional means, cash or card, but also CashApp, and EBT/SNAP benefits. An additional perk for EBT/SNAP users is easy enrollment into Double Up Food Bucks, a program to double the amount spent on produce and food-

producing plants. For example, if you spend \$20 on vegetables, you receive \$20 in Double Up Food Bucks to be used at all participating locations, including the Online Farm Store.

In Brooks’s case, the ease of access to fresh, quality produce locally was the major perk. She says, “Especially being in Detroit, you can find quality good food, but a lot of people are trapped in their areas, and may not have great access to fresh fruits and veggies. Being part of this, you can experiment and try out new things, and you know you don’t want to waste it.”

Food sovereignty for the next generation

Being able to have autonomy and independence on the agricultural systems that provide you and your family with the food that nourishes you is at the heart of food sovereignty. Whether you are a GID farmer or Online Farm Store customer, the nourishment of good food and all the values grown into it are passed onto those who will come after you.

Brooks explains, “It’s not just for me. I bring my youngest daughter with me, too, to get her involved so that



Iverson dropping off her latest harvest for the Online Farm Store at Keep Growing Detroit Farm.

it can pass onto the next generation. Hopefully, this is something they realize they can pick up: the basics of what they can grow in their own yard, and getting a more hands-on feel to the food that they’re eating.”

Ultimately, growing this wisdom into Iverson’s family will become critical tools for their future. She says, “Teaching the children is a huge part of the growing process for me because I have 5 children under the age of 10. It’s to the point where they look forward to not only harvesting vegetables, but helping during the tilling and also eating the food. They understand now that food doesn’t come from a grocery store, it comes from the ground. And that gives them not only financial, but generational wealth because farming is a sustainable source of revenue.”

Danielle Daguio (she/her) is the Fundraising and Data Specialist at Keep Growing Detroit

Learn more about Grown in Detroit and the Online Farm Store by visiting:

www.keepingrowingdetroit.org



Grown in Detroit grower Detra Iverson of Love N Labor Botanicals Farm.

Creative Expression in the Garden

Detroit Month of Design

BY MYRTLE THOMPSON CURTIS

In the late summer, the Fox Creek Artscape hosted Freedom Growers and the College of Creative Studies as part of Detroit Month of Design. The four-week series celebrated family, harvests, and design. The events were a continuation of the Freedom Freedom Growers Art in The Garden programming created to foster the creative language from all members of the community through different mediums of expression.

Focusing on youth, the events included tours of the unique space on Detroit's east side, combining distinctive, sustainable architecture, hardscapes, and visual arts, all supporting ongoing community engagement, classes, and performances.

Stephanie Mae, the primary art instructor said, "Each weekend we've been exploring the garden, observing the sunflowers, blackberries, marigolds, and more with curious and patient eyes. It's been joyful watching artists of all ages interpret the beauty of nature around us!"

Art in the Garden featured short, hands-on youth and family activities in both art and gardening and free sugar baby watermelons grown on the farm served by youth from the FFG Ubuntu Enrichment Camp.

Detroit's first-ever Artscape stands adjacent to Freedom Freedom's garden on Manistique south of Jefferson Ave at the old Fox Creek in Detroit. Freedom Freedom Grower's community spirit, love, and care for the land, the College for Creative Studies' experience and resources, community residents,

and artists have combined to bring a unified vision to life. The structures, lighting, plantings, paths, benches, and murals come together in an open, inviting space. It is a place where the community and local artists, performers, and farmers come together in celebration.

Fox Creek Pavilion

The Pavilion serves as a gathering space for the community to connect, or just chill out, on benches placed under the shade trees. The children love the boulders and straw bales to climb and sit on. The Pavilion sits at 889 Manistique, south of Jefferson and across the street from the Freedom Freedom garden. Green pavilion elements include a long-lasting Michigan White Cedar frame, polycarbonate roof with water collection and storage system, and a permeable foundation base. The pavilion is a welcoming meeting place for the public and supports community events. A focus of the pavilion is the "Healin Walls" which are freestanding murals inspired by historic peoples and cultures.

Fox Creek Farm Stand

This project builds upon Freedom Freedom's years of experience in urban gardening within the Jefferson Chalmers community. Directly adjacent to the garden, the Fox Creek Farm Stand's Michigan White Cedar frame sits close to the street on a renovated lot that includes a garden "room." Like the pavilion, the Farm Stand also has a water collection system.

The Artscape and Farm Stand have had to cope with severe flooding this year. Planned garden rooms were pared down so that much of the land could be left in a more natural state to help with flooding.

The College for Creative Studies and Freedom Freedom were pleased with the response from community residents that attended and participated in this year's events. So many people came together to make art and gardens happen. Grow a garden, grow a community.



Art In The Garden. Photos by Amy Senese.



Take tha House Back by Will See

Take the houses back (x6)
They belong to the people
Take the houses back!

Chorus

Take the house back baby
Take the house back
Take the house back baby
Take the house back
We don't got go get nobody's mousetrap
We got what we need in our community!

Grab the keys in your hand unlock that
Get a crowbar and just rock that
Lets meet at the bank and just crowd that
Show elites that we know where the powers at (Right Here!)

Take vacant houses turn em into homes
Let your mental roam
Like a signal phone
Its true indeed there's a human need
People on the street and the cribs empty
This ain't no baby babe ain't no ass to shake
Just an opening bell. get the class awake

Coz we mad as hell man its cold as hell
We some northern soldiers they made us yell
To my southern cousins— lets take it there
On the coasts provoke and protect your peeps
Occupy our homes— lets play for keeps!
—let's roll the dice, this game is deep

Take abandoned lots make em garden plots
Then guard them plots cause the block is hot
Un bar the locks then watch for cops
When we. get together we're hard to stop!

(Chorus – 2x)

Grab the keys in your hand unlock that
Get a crowbar and just rock that
Lets meet at the bank and just crowd that
Show elites that we know where the powers at (Right Here!)

We got the mommas poppas attorneys rockers
Kids in the fosters, vets, and doctors

Black flags, activists, gramps, and nomads
Grannies, big ole families, oh man

Take the house back baby take the house (4x)

Every body need a place to kick back
When you get yours then it's time to give back
Say we can't wait man, get your abatement
Everybody eating — come grab your plate, man
My granny and my uncle and my aunt used to share a crib
Where you live? it's no embarrassment
There you is

She got a house when she wrote that check
And he got his house went to court and shit
And they kept their home when the folks protest
And my man got his spot for a buck and a lease

When the banks foreclosure game ain't over
I swang thru the office they marched like soldiers
Say

Whats wrong baby girl, bring your doll back
Grab your gym shoes your bike bring it all back
No trouble baby brotha grab your ball bat
Get your comic books come on grab all that

(Chorus)

Grab the keys in your hand unlock that
Get a crowbar and just rock that
Lets meet at the bank and just crowd that
Show elites that we know where the powers at (Right Here!)

Will See (Owólabi Aboyade) is a father, multidimensional culture worker, and co-founder of *Relentless Bodies*, a Detroit-based creative disability and healing justice collective.

Watch the Video Now!
Simply scan the QR
Code using your
smartphone camera:



Sacred Spaces:

Across Detroit, gardens of all kinds have long been a source of healing, resilience, and affirmation of our connection to the earth. The images featured here come from members of our beloved community who answered our call on social media to share their happy, sacred spaces...their backyard gardens. Thanks to all those who shared!



Art Official

POEM BY JOE KIDD

I do not live in this small town
I live in the great expanding void of the universe
the holiday of day one
the elusive home of nothing that is

I am not confined to this
prison cell
hospital bed
wheelchair
closed mind

My windows are wide open
the fresh air blows through my doorway
unlocked
unblocked

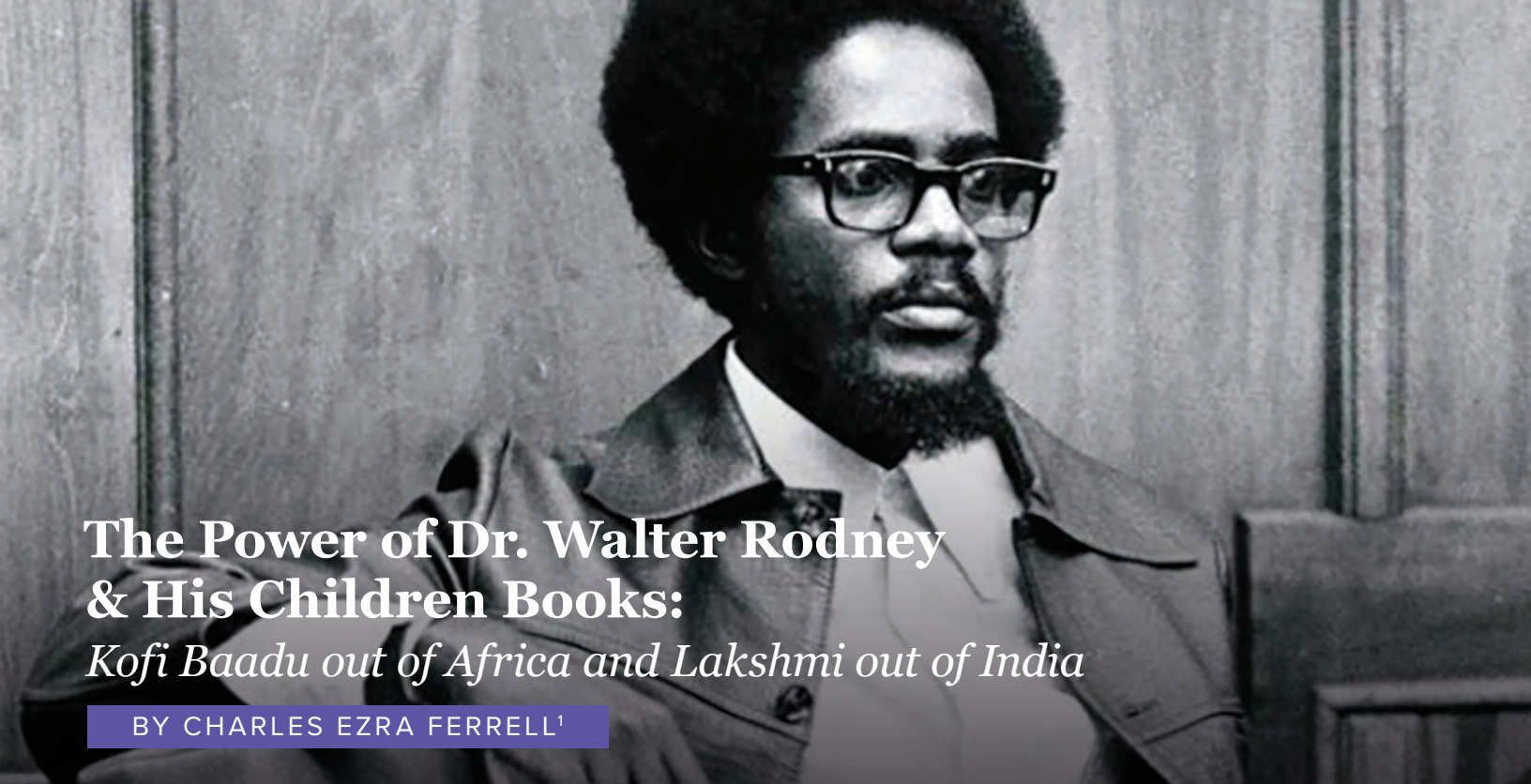
My vehicle is the color
that radiates from my eyes
my beating drum
my family
who are the countless selves climbing the mountains
wings in the sky
high, high above the rest of me
the diaspora of me
inside of me
some will live

I lean upon the me that is you
not artificial
I lean upon the stone altar
naturalized
circular
talking to the selves
not yet me

Joe Kidd (pictured in background) is a working poet, singer, songwriter, and musician touring North America and Western Europe. Inducted into the Michigan Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2017. In 2020, published *The Invisible Waterhole*, a collection of spiritual and sensual verse. He has been awarded by the Michigan Governor's Office and the US House of Representatives for his work to advance Peace, Social Justice, and Cultural Diversity. Joe is a speech writer, and a music, poetry, and film reviewer for international magazines and websites.

Author Page: www.amazon.com/Joe-Kidd/e/B089QYDXSM

Official Website: www.joekiddandsheilaburke.com



The Power of Dr. Walter Rodney & His Children Books: *Kofi Baadu out of Africa and Lakshmi out of India*

BY CHARLES EZRA FERRELL¹

Photo of Dr. Walter Rodney (National Security Archives).

Background

Dr. Walter Anthony Rodney, born March 23, 1942 in Georgetown, Guyana (South America) was an extraordinary human being. His achievements and impact defy his 38-year lifespan. Rodney stands in the forefront with our most cherished revolutionaries, particularly those whose lives tragically ended before the age of 40.² He exemplifies the transformational power of vision, critical analysis, independent thought, effective communication, compassion, and focused determination. Rodney's life and works remain relevant today and worthy of serious study. In fact, re-experiencing his words and penetrating cadence in text, audio or film, strengthens our cultural memory and aids in our understanding of current realities.

Throughout his career, Rodney achieved the highest distinction. After continuous scholarships in his native Guyana and Jamaica, he obtained his PhD with high honors from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London at the age of 24, before the

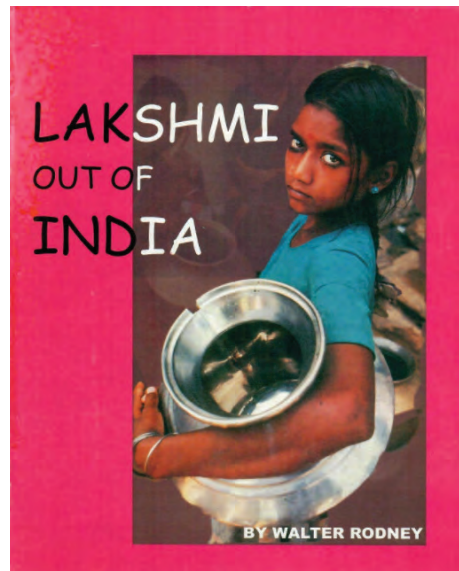
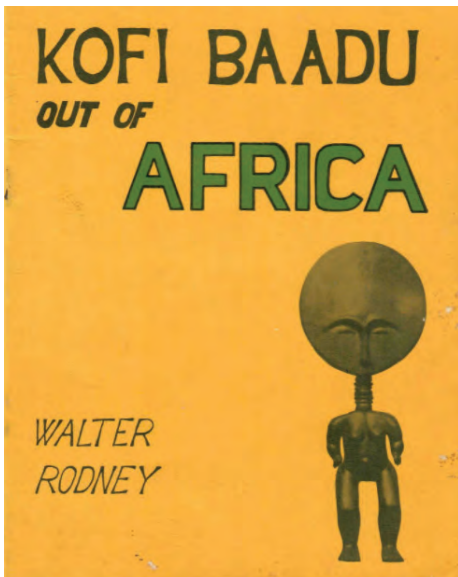
ubiquitous Internet or computers. His archives are replete with copious handwritten notes and typewritten pages.

Rodney was the paradigmatic icon of the scholar-activist, a preeminent voice of Black Power and a relentless fighter on behalf of the interests of the working class and against colonial and neo-colonial hegemony in South America, the Caribbean, Africa, and North America. He is renowned for his most celebrated and seminal work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. That work, much like Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, was feared by imperialists and lauded by progressives for its surgical analysis, demythization of the true nature of oppressive forces, and strategies for liberation.³ In terms of Rodney's precision, it is noteworthy that his father was a tailor and his mother a seamstress.⁴ His *Grounding with My Brothers*, highlights the importance of the guerilla intellectual, one who uses their academic credentials, intellectual rigor and oratory to educate *and learn from* the workers, the students, and especially the youth outside of the university context.

On June 10, 2021, forty-one years after the brutal assassination of Dr. Walter Rodney, and as the principal result of the Rodney family's ceaseless advocacy, the global community's support, and an independent Commission of Inquiry, the Guyanese government finally admitted its bloody complicity. Multiple acts of reparations are underway, including that the books Rodney wrote will now be placed on the national syllabus by the Ministry of Education and provided to students across the country, that The Walter Rodney Chair at the University of Guyana will be re-established, and records that suggest Rodney committed wrongdoing in connection with his assassination will be expunged.⁵

The Importance of Rodney's Children's Books

Dr. Patricia Rodney, a public health administrative educator and the devoted wife of Walter Rodney, reminds us that "though Rodney lived with constant police harassment and frequent threats against his life, he nonetheless managed to complete four books in the last year of his life: An academic work: *A History of the Guyanese*



Book covers: Kofi Baadu Out of Africa and Lakshmi Out of India.

Working People, 1881–1905; A political call to action; *People's Power, No Dictator*, and two children's books: *Kofi Baadu Out of Africa* and *Lakshmi Out of India*.⁶

Dr. Rodney's native Guyana is often said to consist of six "peoples" of various ethnicities, of which those of African and East Indian descent make up the largest portion of the population. In Guyana, just as it is throughout much of the world, conflict between peoples exist and so Dr. Rodney, a humanitarian, devoted his life to address and improve racial unity, social justice, and liberation. "The whole reason he was writing those series was so that the children of Guyana could begin to understand their history and each other . . . to create not just tolerance but an understanding of people and their lives," his wife explained. Dr. Rodney published two children's books (for ages 10–18): *Kofi Baadu out of Africa*. (Georgetown, Guyana, 1980) and *Lakshmi out of India*. (Georgetown, Guyana: The Guyana Book Foundation, 2000).

The books provide readers with historical, geographical and cultural experiences and lessons, using a relatable narrative format. In the introduction to *Kofi Baadu out of Africa*, Dr. Rodney wrote, "This collective effort hopes to make a modest contribution to revealing further aspects of our rich and varied heritage, so that children, at least, might better understand themselves and each other." In this spirit, Dr. Patricia Rodney and her three children: Shaka, an entrepreneur; Kanini, a physician; and Asha, a lawyer, also hope to publish another series of children's books one day.⁷

Dr. Walter Rodney children's books were written to counter racism (the false notion of resource and opportunity division based on race stratification and hierarchy) to unify humanity, particularly the working class. He was seeking to unify peoples of *all* races, in particular African and Indians, in the perennial struggle for justice and liberation.^[2] In the tradition of Dr. Walter Anthony Rodney, we must continuously educate our children to understand their history, to unify, and for the sake of humanity, to advance the struggle against racism, classism, sexism, materialism, imperialism, and white supremacy.

Looking to The Past For Future Inspiration

Kofi Baadu out of Africa is 25 pages and *Lakshmi out of India* is 35 pages. They both require new covers, pictorial layouts, font alterations and

enlargement, text adjustments, new forewords, acknowledgements and testimonials. Grants and donations are being sought. Once the books are republished, a marketing campaign will be initiated and coordinated to ensure the successful launch of this project. Books will be distributed to The Walter Rodney Foundation, the James and Grace Lee Boggs School, the Detroit Independent Freedom Schools Movement, and the Legacy for Literacy, Inc. for distribution to students and the community. *Riverwise Magazine*, Broadside Lotus Press, and Source Booksellers will also facilitate maximum distribution and awareness. All proceeds from the sale of these publications will support The Walter Rodney Foundation. The family of Dr. Walter Anthony Rodney will retain complete and full intellectual property rights of these publications and welcomes donations to the Walter Rodney Foundation. Learn more and take action to help advance this cause at www.walterrodneyfoundation.org.

¹Charles Ezra Ferrell (aka Kariuki) is a board member of the Walter Rodney Foundation. He also serves on the board of General Baker Institute, the Executive Council of the Association for the Study of American Life and History (ASALH), the Concert of Colors Advisory Board, and he is a member of the Coalition for Police Transparency and Accountability and an advisor to PBS Books.

²Review the lives and works of Dr. Frantz Fanon, age 36; Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, age 35; El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Minister and Malcolm X), age 39; Dr. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, age 39; Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., age 39; and Dr. Stephen Biko, age 30.

³Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Published by Bogle-L'Ouverture and the Tanzania Publishing House. London, 1972.; Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Les Damnés de la Terre). Grove Press. New York, 1961; *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

⁴Walter Rodney Speaks, *African Work Press*. Trenton, NJ, Institute of the Black World, 1990.

⁵<https://atlantablackstar.com/2021/07/18/its-been-a-long-journey-guyana-to-formally-recognize-revolutionary-scholar-dr-walter-rodney-41-years-after-his-assassination/>

^{6,7}Walter Rodney Foundation website: www.walterrodneyfoundation.org. Walter Rodney Biography.

Revolution is Self-defense!



Art by Stephanie McMillan



Color me! Share on social media and tag us at @riverwisemagazine



People visit the Detroit Memorial Repast on Belle Isle to collectively acknowledge our losses during COVID-19.
Photo by Megan Douglass.

9/11 to COVID-19

Reflections on Collective Grief

BY KELLY HAYES

The millions of people who have died of COVID-19 deserve to be memorialized with the reverence that will be shown for victims of the 9/11 attacks this weekend, but they are shown no such reverence because our grief over our COVID-19 losses cannot be weaponized to make us more patriotic or supportive of imperial warfare. Pandemic grief, if let loose upon the world at the volume it deserves, would shake capitalism to its core, or even upend it, so it is smothered with talk of getting “back to normal.”

I'm not saying you shouldn't remember the people who were lost on 9/11. You should remember them, just as you should remember the hundreds of thousands of people who were slaughtered in their names — a legacy no one in the towers asked for or deserved. I'm saying that grief has power, and the death-makers know that. Your grief has power. So as they try to bury it, in a failing performance of normalcy, while they evict people en masse, and cut off unemployment, and force people to walk the economic plank to maintain this system, I say let them see the power of our grief and the rage that's buried within it. I will not weep on cue for the sake of nationalism. I will wail and roar at my real enemies — the ones that maintain this system of disposability that we are all subject to — and I hope you will too.

—Kelly Hayes Facebook post September 10, 2021.

Kelly Hayes is the host of Truthout's podcast “Movement Memos” and a contributing writer at Truthout. Kelly's written work can also be found in Teen Vogue, Bustle, Yes! Magazine, Pacific Standard, NBC Think, her blog “Transformative Spaces,” The Appeal, the anthology *The Solidarity Struggle: How People of Color Succeed and Fail At Showing Up For Each Other In the Fight For Freedom* and Truthout's anthology on movements against state violence, *Who Do You Serve, Who Do You Protect?* Kelly is also a direct action trainer and a co-founder of the direct action collective *Lifted Voices*. Kelly was honored for her organizing and education work in 2014 with the *Women to Celebrate* award, and in 2018 with the *Chicago Freedom School's Champions of Justice Award*. Kelly's movement photography is featured in “*Freedom and Resistance*” exhibit of the *DuSable Museum of African American History*.

Listen to the “Movement Memos” Podcast! Simply scan the QR Code using your smartphone camera:



The Warmth of Other Sons

BY JUNIUS WILLIAMS, ESQ.

Bisa Butler is a young, talented quilter from South Orange, New Jersey, whose work has gained international attention. Recently I heard her on WNBC-TV talking about her masterpiece, “The Warmth of Other Sons,” which has a permanent home in the much-renowned Newark Art Museum. It is a spectacular quilt in living color, an homage to the Great Migration, when a million African Americans fled the South and moved to places like Newark, New York, Detroit, and Los Angeles to get away from Jim Crow violence, segregation and economic exploitation. It is more than just a work of art, but a portrayal of history, a story written in the faces and body language of the men, women and children who lived that sometimes perilous journey, leaving everything in hope of a better future for themselves and their children.

And then I pictured the Haitians, 14,000 of them who had crossed the Rio Grande that separates Mexico from the United States, waiting patiently to apply for asylum in the US, in a little town I never heard of called Del Rio, Texas. They were on their way North, seeking the same relief and opportunity my father’s parents sought just two generations ago.

How did they get there? To we who watched the news it seemed they just appeared overnight, and were now being pushed and shoved by armed border patrolmen on horses, as more attempted to join the encampment or went back and forth into Mexico to get food for their families. What is their story as seen on their faces, their brown bodies, and the voices of the children, some of whom spoke no Haitian Creole but Spanish?

This migration started in Haiti 10

years ago and took some of the adults to Brazil, Panama, Chile and, most recently, Mexico, all in search of that better life, towards that compelling beacon that flashed, “United States.” In some places they were treated better than in others (Brazil). But the jobs went away when the economy worsened. In other countries (in Chile, for example) they persevered in the face of racism because of the color of their skin. In all cases, they gave up whatever they had accumulated, converted whatever little wealth they had to get money to continue their journey, and here they are, knocking on what they thought was freedom’s door, only to be met with the same violence and humiliation they were fleeing.

Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas said his state was being “invaded” by Haitians. Come on, Ted. Why don’t you call them who they really are: a part of the vanguard of hungry and oppressed people from the geographic South who stand in line for recognition by the US government that they are entitled to entry for a better life because of America’s unclean hands.

An article published by the United States Institute of Peace (2006) said: By 1984, it was evident that the Haitian assembly industry—which symbolized the international community’s development strategy—provided no long-term benefits to the country. Materials were imported for assembly, while finished products were exported and consumed abroad. Reliance on cheap, unskilled labor did little to improve the skills of Haiti’s labor force, encourage training or stimulate technology transfer. Reliance on the U.S. market meant Haiti was at the mercy of U.S. import quotas and consumer preferences.

In 2002, only four percent of



Demonstrators for human rights outside of Cobo Hall (TCF Center). 2019. Photo by Megan Douglass.

the population (at the behest of homegrown dictators and outside foreign influences) controlled 66 percent of the country’s assets. Meanwhile, a series of ruinous agricultural trade policies destroyed Haiti’s previously successful small farmers, a sector that had produced exports of rice, pork, and chicken. Haiti became a net importer of agricultural products with growing food insecurity and malnutrition for the majority of its people.

Maybe Bisa Butler can quilt this journey of the Haitian people, showing in their bodies their betrayal; their endurance, character, anger, grit and determination, in spite of all the obstacles thrown in their path in their decade-long journey. Certainly, the story of these 14,000 people, some of them rounded up like cattle and tricked into thinking they are going to Florida, but instead flown to Haiti where some of their children have never been, is a story to be told as a portrait of suffering and determination; but also a story of deceit, and exploitation by the usual suspects within these United States of America.

Junius Williams is a member of the National Council of Elders based on a lifetime of working for peace and justice. He is an historian, blues man and organizer. He does a monthly podcast, Everything's Political.

A photograph of Winona LaDuke, a Native American activist, speaking at a microphone. She is wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a denim jacket over a red and black patterned shirt, and is smiling. The background is a brick wall.

Change is Surging

BY WINONA LADUKE

Winona LaDuke speaking at Conkling Heritage Park on May 13, 2021 Evict Enbridge rally. Photo by Valerie Jean.

Speech given by Winona LaDuke at Conkling Heritage Park in Mackinaw City on May 13, 2021 at the Evict Enbridge Rally. Lightly edited for clarity. —Riverwise Ed.

I know a lot of you, I'm related to a lot of you. We're the people that have lived here for 10,000 years. Once you could drink the water and there were fish everywhere. That's when America was great.

Maple trees weren't just one here or there. People would get 463,000 pounds of maple sugar in a year. The Creator put us here, and I'm grateful, as we all are, for this good life that the Creator gave us and for these lakes. This is one fifth of the world's water, you know. What a great place to be, what a great place to be living in this world.

I'm older than a lot of you. You know, it seems like I spent my whole life fighting stupid ideas, one bad idea after another. Some days I ask, "How did they dream that one up?" I just cannot believe it. I heard someone wants to take the water from Superior on trains down to Arizona. Someone wants to put mines at the top of headwaters or to put nuclear waste near people.

You know it's time to evolve.

Our people talk about this in our prophecies as the time of the seventh fire. Our ancestors told us that in the time of the seventh fire our people would have a choice between two paths. One path would be well worn, but it would be scorched. The other path would not be well worn, and it would be green. That is our path, and I know that we're working really hard on that path.

We have all had a wake-up call with this pandemic. Arundhati Roy, she's a writer from India, talks about the pandemic as a portal. She says that in the history of the world, pandemics have forced societies to change. This one is no different. It brings us to our knees. Roy asks, "What do you want to bring through the portal between this world and the next one?" Do you want to bring your hatred, your avarice, your data banks, your dirty skies, your dirty rivers? Or do you want to walk through clean?

I think we want to walk through with good minds, with good hearts, and with good prayers. We want to walk through and make that transformation that we know is underway.

*We all know
that there is a
change that is
surging because
we are making
that change with
Mother Earth.*

My sisters and brothers, that's why we are here. Enbridge has a playbook from the last century and it wasn't a good playbook. The reality is that this is the end of the fossil fuels era and we know it. The party is over.

It doesn't take too much for us to talk about catastrophes of biblical proportions that are all around us. We all know that the West Coast is burning. Australia is burning. In the North everything is thawing. In the South there are tornadoes. The pandemic sounds pretty biblical. You know what I'm saying, it looks like time to wake ourselves up.

We all know that there is a change that is surging because we are

making that change with Mother Earth. We have got to be the bold and courageous people for those that are a little bit more scared. We have to help them say it's okay.

I remember having a talk with the Aitkin county sheriff. He said, "I'm gonna have to arrest you." I said, "I know. You got your job and I got mine. You work for the county. I work for Mother Earth. That's who we work for. We work for our relatives, for the little guys, even these mayflies. I have to admit I'm working for them. They are life. There's so much of it here where we live, where the wild things still are.

We live where the waters are still clean, where all our relatives still are here. We've got frogs! I mean a lot of people don't have frogs anymore. We have wolves and bears, and all kinds of creatures in the water. On a worldwide scale, indigenous people are about four percent of the population, but we hold 75 percent of the biodiversity. If you want to protect life, you've got to work with us. We all work together in this. We all work together for a time ahead.

On March 23rd we had a good court hearing where Enbridge was facing the Department of Commerce from

Minnesota. The government should never have issued those permits to Enbridge. There's nothing that was acceptable about any of these permits. You don't issue permits to dirty oil pipeline companies from Canada with two big spills that put your whole ecosystem at risk; you don't issue permits to companies with 225 subsidiaries that protect the mothership, but have no coverage for the people of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan or the Anishinaabe people. You don't issue permits to guys like that.

What you do is you make a plan for their decommissioning. So I'm all ready to sign up for that, for the transition.

Enbridge is going to attempt to resume construction, but they cannot cross our rivers. In Standing Rock, they had one river. Here we have twenty-two, and hundreds of thousands of water protectors.

We're calling people out to the rivers. Bring your canoes, or come and stand, come be present. I could never tell someone to come and get arrested, you'd have to make those decisions on your own. But people are going to stand up for what's right.

The question to the Governor is what's he going to do? Is he going to shoot me for a Canadian pipeline company? We're all veterans of Standing Rock and we saw what happens when multinational corporations control the police and when the rights of corporations supersede the rights of people.

We all know that that's wrong and we all know that their party is over and that their assets are slipping. So we fight them and we keep pushing because it's the latest cost on the most expensive pipeline ever built. It is nine billion dollars, Enbridge's most expensive pipeline line, and they don't even have it built.

So stand strong with your people. Come join us. Minnesota is the land of camps and, fortunately, there are public campgrounds next to most of the water crossings. Come, camp on public lands, be the public, be present. Then let's just make the next economy.

I'm all ready.

Watch Winona LaDuke giving this speech here:

<https://youtu.be/bFeegi8V6kU>

Indigenous water protectors at the Evict Enbridge rally on May 13, 2021. Photo by Megan Douglass.



World Economic Forum: Not Here to Save Us

BY PEOPLE AGAINST CORPORATE THEFT

The World Economic Forum, an organization of the capitalist elite, with representatives of Bank of America, Citi, J.P. Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, Barclays, and the European Central Bank, among others, are meeting in Detroit. They are setting up a temporary base of operations in Dan Gilbert's Compuware building for what they are calling the "Global Centre for Urban Transformation" with an official launch announced for October 25th while the permanent site is being built on Gratiot.

The WEF is an agency that upholds and facilitates multinational corporations' control, exploitation and greed. They cloak insidious corporate thievery in words like "transformation," "future city," "public-private collaboration," "economic growth," and "revival" in campaigns to persuade the public to go along with their agendas.

Detroit was chosen because it exemplifies the most extreme contradictions in the current stage of capitalism. For the past eight years Mike Duggan, backed by Rick Snyder, and now by Gretchen Whitmer, has made it clear that the profiteering of corporations off of public space and resources is more important than the needs of Detroiters. The mayor has done everything in his power to ensure the exponential spread of gentrification that is pricing everyday people out of the city. Instead of redeveloping badly needed wastewater infrastructure, he is putting in bike lanes. Instead of creating a citywide publicly funded housing affordability plan, he is leaving poor and working class people to the whims of the market amid skyrocketing rents and stagnant wages. Instead of returning the \$600 million in overtaxation, he is pushing subsidies for billionaires to carve up the 7.2 square miles of downtown rather than address material needs of a majority Black city in which well over 30 percent of people live in poverty.

The capitalists who make up the World Economic Forum have turned

Detroit into a model of "Urban Destruction." They have transformed Detroit, once a great center for the working class and oppressed, the city where the Black Liberation and Working Class struggles reached their zenith, into a center of poverty, evictions, water shutoffs, high infant mortality, and empty fields where working-class neighborhoods once stood.

These are the same financial institutions that coerced tens of thousands of Detroiters into predatory and fraudulent mortgage loans, resulting in 65,000 bank foreclosures from 2005–2010 and driving one quarter of Detroit's people out of the city. Dan Gilbert and Quicken Loans wrote many of these fraudulent mortgages for the banks, and coupled them with fraudulent property assessments that artificially overinflated home values and led to thousands of property tax foreclosures. Detroit, the city that once led the US in Black home ownership, is now a renter city with 35,000 tenants evicted every year.

These financial institutions bankrupted the city government, the school system and the water department with predatory loans, and usurped elected officials with appointed emergency managers. The emergency managers appointed by the state implemented the massive privatization of city services, a virtual shutdown of the Detroit Health Department, massive water shutoffs to pay off the bondholders, and a school system that was declared by the courts as unfit to provide access to basic literacy. Mike Duggan and the city council have facilitated this robbery of the people while giving massive tax breaks and captures to Gilbert, Iltich, Ford, and numerous other private interests, just as the banks were bailed out by the federal government after their scheme collapsed.

One of the primary strategies of the WEF is to work through the liberal nonprofit industrial complex to co-opt community into their project of

dispossession, and quell independent political opposition. Nonprofits are by and large beholden to philanthropic entities that are funded by private capital. They show up in the community with conditional budgets to superficially address structural inequality that they are incapable of solving. In reality, they are assisting in the appropriation of resources and assets (our tax dollars and government allocation), to expand the wealth and political control of private interests that are antithetical to the needs of the public. This is one of the ways public-private partnerships function under neoliberalism.

All of this has been done to create an environment in which the wealthy reap the profits while Detroit taxpayers foot the bill. This fifty-year project of theft in Detroit is the model that the World Economic Forum is upholding and intends to emulate wherever there are profits to be made.

From a working class city of 1.8 million where workers could actually afford homes, Detroit has now been reduced to a city with 637,000 people. Once thriving neighborhoods now are centers of blight and empty fields, while the only development is downtown for the corporate elite. The people of Detroit say No to the World Economic Forum and the same bankers who pillaged this city. They are the ones who created the ongoing structural inequality in Detroit. **They are not here to save us.** The people of Detroit and the world deserve governance in the interest of the public, not the private entities that have exploited us.

Throughout this project of racialized neoliberal dispossession, Detroiters have never stopped fighting for their schools, the right to water, the right to housing, and the right to their own public resources. There is a growing list of organizations committed to opposing the wholesale theft of Detroit and cities around the world by the members of the World Economic Forum and to demanding respect for the economic and human rights of all people.

Fixing Michigan's Broken Bail System Requires More than Talk

BY RODD MONTS

Michigan's bail system is broken, and thousands of people suffer every day as a result.

That is why the ACLU of Michigan is working with a team of coalition partners around the state to fix a system in desperate need of repair. The next step in that work involves putting as many people as possible in touch with their legislators to advocate for bail reform. Volunteers working with the ACLU of Michigan are hosting a series of phone banks this fall with a goal of getting more people involved in bail reform advocacy. Text banking opportunities will also be available.

On any given day, Michigan's jail population is about 16,000, with about half of those men and women there pretrial – meaning they haven't been convicted of a crime, according to the Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration. Black residents are six times more likely to be jailed across the state than white residents. And regardless of race, Michigan police agencies jail far too many people at a ridiculous cost. Taxpayers spent about \$478 million on county jails and corrections in 2017 alone.

It may sound counterintuitive, but throwing people in jail can make communities less safe. That's because people sitting in jail because they can't afford to buy their freedom run the risk of losing their jobs, which can lead to losing their housing, or even custody of their children. When lives are thrown into disarray like that, and people are put into a financial hole, the risk of them committing another crime increases once they do get out.

During my time working on the ACLU's Campaign for Smart Justice, I have met a number of people who have shared stories of being jailed pretrial or had loved ones stuck in jail because they couldn't afford bail, and taken deals that allowed them to get out in exchange for pleading guilty, even if innocent. They did so because it was the quickest way to get back to their jobs and families,

I also keep top of mind the story of Djibril Niyomugabo of Grand Rapids. Djibril was arrested at age 18 for allegedly smashing a car window and destroying a bottle of wine that he found inside the vehicle. He was ordered to be held pretrial on \$200 bail. After three days of sitting in the Kent County jail, unable to afford to buy his freedom, he committed suicide in his cell.

Some may say Djibril's story is an outlier. I believe it is emblematic of a system that disrupts far too many lives. We've heard the heartbreaking stories of bail's unintended consequences over and over – far more than enough to substantiate the need for reform.

The good news is that we know some Michigan legislators have the will to overhaul the state's bail system. They are trying to do it this year. We all can help them by encouraging their colleagues in Lansing to stand with them and to commit to moving the bills along through the system once they are introduced so that we can get the necessary bail fix done by the end of 2021. That's why participation in the aforementioned advocacy opportunities is so critical.

Rodd Monts is a Senior Staff Attorney for the ACLU Michigan.



Anyone interested in getting involved can also sign up to learn more about phone and text banking opportunities. REGISTER HERE:

bit.ly/miphonebanking

bit.ly/mitextbanking



No New Jails protest in Detroit.
Photo by Miriam Pickens.

The Michigan Coalition For Human Rights Freedom Tour

An Experience I Wouldn't Trade for Anything: Notes from a Tour Student

BY MARGARET FLEURY

I'm not sure where to begin on just how impactful the Freedom Tour was and continues to be to me! As a teenager, you're not exactly sure just how to gain footing in the world of activism, but the guidance, care, knowledge, and fun you encounter when you experience the incredible journey that is the Freedom Tour? Life changing. The experience was life changing.

Before we even went on the two-week adventure, the fellow students and I who were going on the 2016 Freedom Tour were invited to amazing events and community service opportunities. These activities served as bonding experiences for all of us and also taught us more about human rights, injustice, and the Civil Rights Movement than school (of any level) ever could! We traveled throughout the south meeting civil rights leaders and prominent Black political figures, learning directly from them.

One of my favorite examples of this was getting to meet Dr. Bernard Lafayette and completing his nonviolence training camp (still have the certificate to prove it!) We also visited at least a dozen terrific museums, from the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta to the Civil Rights Institute in Alabama which is located right across the street from the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Aside from the monumental amount of knowledge you gain, the fun you have is unmatched! We were able to hang out at the pool some evenings at our hotels, we got to explore the CNN center in Atlanta, walk around Berea, Kentucky...the cutest little town! And...the soul food! Don't even get me started. To this day, I can't go a week without baked mac-n-cheese or sweet tea! I even have lifelong friendships that I was blessed to create during the tour.

The mentors who guide you and the people you encounter along the way are some of the most supportive individuals you will ever meet! This trip truly was such a formative experience and continues to positively influence my life almost six years on. I'm forever grateful for being a Freedom Tour graduate!

Photos from 2016 Freedom Tour.



Join the 2022 Freedom Tour!

Mon., June 20th - Fri., July 1st, 2022

Open to All Michigan

High School Students age 14-18

Build lifelong relationships, travel through the history of the Civil Rights Movement, develop your skills at social justice activism.

To Learn More or Apply:

Email Or Call Chantelle Yancy

MCHRFreedomtour@gmail.com

313-579-9071



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**Monday June 20 - Friday, July 1, 2022 -
Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee...**

**Your Support Will Help Send A Michigan High School
Student on A Journey To Discover The Past In Order to
Create New Pathways for Justice in The Future.**

Michigan Coalition for Human Rights (MCHR) promotes awareness of, commitment to and advocacy for human rights and the environmental rights of planet Earth through education, community organization and action.

MCHR opposes forces that suppress human dignity and justice — locally and around the world.



Freedom Tour 2022: How To Donate:

FYI: \$1500 covers the full cost of the tour for one student.

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411

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Questions? Want to nominate a youth for tour? Email: [Chantelle Yancy @MCHRfreedomtour@gmail.com](mailto:ChantelleYancy@MCHRfreedomtour@gmail.com)

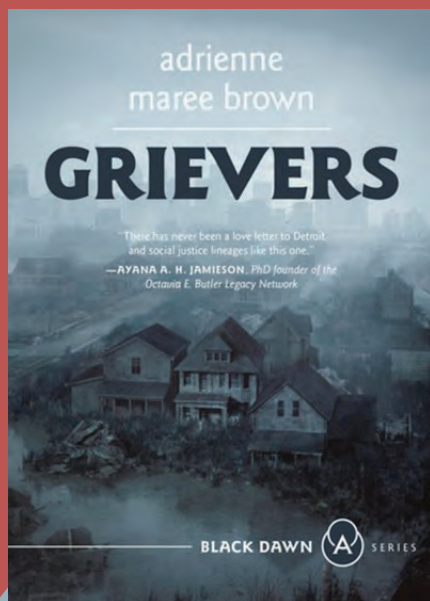
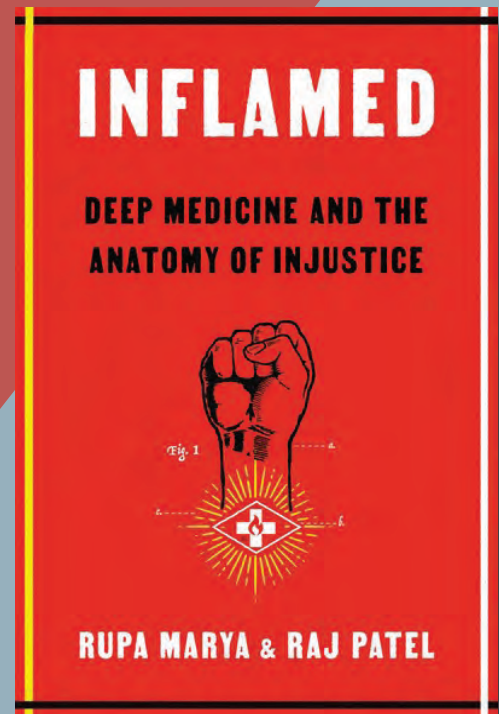
What We're Reading...

***Inflamed* by Rupa Marya & Raj Patel**

The coronavirus pandemic and the shocking racial disparities in its impact. A surge in inflammatory illnesses such as gastrointestinal disorders and asthma. Mass uprisings around the world in response to systemic racism and violence. Climate refugees. Deaths of despair. This is the epoch of endless fire. Your body, society, and planet are inflamed. What is the cause? And how do we begin to restore our individual and collective health?

Boldly original and deeply researched, *Inflamed* takes us on a medical tour through our digestive, endocrine, circulatory, respiratory, reproductive, immune, and nervous systems. Unlike a traditional anatomy book, however, this groundbreaking work illuminates what ails us as a whole, mapping the hidden connections between our biological systems and the profound injustices of our political, economic, social, and ecological systems. Inflammation is connected to the ground beneath our feet, the food that we eat, the air that we breathe, and the diversity of microbes living inside us, which regulate everything from our brain development to our immune system. It's connected to the number of traumatic events we experienced as children and to the trauma endured by our ancestors. It's connected not only to access to health care but to the very models of health that physicians bring to their medical practice.

Raj Patel, the renowned political economist and *New York Times*—bestselling author of *The Value of Nothing*, teams up with the physician and professor of medicine Rupa Marya to offer a radical new cure: the deep medicine of decolonization. If colonization is about dividing and conquering in order to centralize control of resources, decolonization is to heal what has been divided, reestablishing our relationship to the earth, our relationship to each other, and our relationship to our own bodies. The book draws on Rupa Marya's work with patients in marginalized communities and the scholarship on globalization that has made Raj Patel a rock star on the Left.



***Grievors* by adrienne maree brown**

"*Grievors* is a beautiful debut novella by adrienne maree brown, who is already one of our most important voices in Afrofuturism and true-life worldbuilding. *Grievors* could not be more timely: tracking loss, plague, gentrification, memory and grief with a path toward hope in a future Detroit. Each paragraph is lovingly crafted, a story unto itself, blending into a tapestry no reader will soon forget." —Tananarive Due, American Book Award winner and author of *Ghosts Summer: Stories*.

Book selections curated by Source Booksellers. Riverwise asks that you support local, independent book stores, including Source Booksellers, Pages Bookshop, and KAN co-op Bookstore.

Serving the Community through Reading Together

A community hub for nearly 50 years, the Detroit Renaissance Lions Club has been raising money to fund programs in support of the Blind and Deaf communities throughout the city. As a part of this effort the group is excited to offer a book club aimed at bringing the community together to read/listen to books that focus on Blindness and Deafness. The book club meetings will accommodate all readers/listeners. Book club membership is simple, read/listen to the books in part or whole during the month and then take part in the conversation about the book.

In November young and adult readers are invited to read/listen together. Join the club online on November 17th as they discuss the Scholastic Gold book *Show Me a Sign* with the Author Ann Clare LeZotte. This read is an opportunity for classrooms and families to understand Deafness through a historical novel. Tickets on Eventbrite for the Author event. In December they return to Blindness with a book that combines ethnomusicology, disability studies and African American history. Book club meeting donations help to cover the event cost and the remaining funds go to the club's projects.



Detroit Renaissance Lions Club Book Club 2021

October



November



December



January



Read a Memoir, a historical fiction, African American history & an a imaginative novel
- all focused on Blindness & Deafness

Learn more and join the
book club at this link

<https://forms.gle/xqcddaDY12Xnuc2j9>



Where is Riverwise?

The locations marked on this map represent just a few of those across Detroit who have carried Riverwise on their shelves and ledges. Due to COVID-19, many have been forced to reduce their operating hours. Some have been forced to close entirely. We send our heartfelt condolences and look forward to their return in the near future.

For now, we're encouraging readers to send us their mailing address and we'll send you the latest copy of Riverwise. We're also hoping that this shift in distribution inspires folks to subscribe or donate, either online, or using the envelope attached to this issue. Please remember, each magazine costs around \$2 to ship. Every contribution helps.



WESTSIDE

Arab American National Museum
Sweet Potato Sensations
Motor City Java House
Detroit Fiber Works
Pages Bookshop
Northwest Activities Center
Focus:Hope
Good Cakes and Bakes
Eric's I've Been Framed
Detroit Sip
Dabls Mbad African Bead Museum
Shrine of the Black Madonna
PizzaPlex
St. Peter's Episcopal
General Baker Institute
Mama Akua House

MID-CITY

Nandi's Knowledge Cafe
KAN Coop Bookstore
Oloman Cafe
Cafe 1923
Detroit Public Library Main Branch
Detroit Historical Museum
Cass Commons
Source Booksellers
Allied Media Projects
Harmonie Gardens
Avalon Int'l Breads on Willis
Charles H. Wright Museum
Hannan House
Spectacles
Central United Methodist
Bert's Warehouse
Trinosophes

EASTSIDE

Boggs Center
Farwell Community Center
Church of the Messiah
Georgia St. Community Collective
Samaritan Center
On the Rise Bakery
Metro Detroit A. Philip Randolph
Community Center
Harbortown Market
Lafayette Foods
Detroit Vegan Soul
Rose's Fine Food Diner
Vegginini's Paradise Cafe
The Commons
MackAlive

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Keep the Riverwise Current Moving

10 WAYS TO KEEP RIVERWISE AFLOAT

Our beloved community of Detroit activists continue the hard work of building a new society rooted in value-based politics rather than material-based economics. Please join us as we continue our work of documenting that critical journey in print and, increasingly, online.

1 DONATE
Employ the donate button at riverwisedetroit.org. Every \$1 prints one issue.

DISPLAY

You can buy special edition posters of Riverwise covers for \$15.

3 WRITE
Attend a Riverwise Writing Workshop and develop your ideas collectively, for Riverwise or yourself. Workshops now occurring online. For more info email: riverwiseinthed@gmail.com.

4 ORGANIZE
Host a small community conversation or block club meeting around issues like water access or other topics covered in Riverwise.

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9 TEACH
As an educator or as a student, tell us how you use Riverwise in your classroom or organization. The youth perspective is vital as we create a just future.

10 LISTEN
Sometimes a story is better told than written. Listen to our full catalog of revolutionary tales on our podcast at riverwisedetroit.org/podcast.





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